



Information Partners Can Use on:

FOOD STAMPS

Medicare Prescription Drug Coverage

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This tip sheet explains how the Food Stamp program works with Medicare prescription drug coverage. It's important for people with Medicare to review and compare their health care and prescription drug coverage each year.

What is Medicare prescription drug coverage?

Medicare prescription drug coverage is available to all people with Medicare. Medicare drug plans provide insurance coverage for prescription drugs. These plans are offered by insurance companies and other private companies approved by Medicare. Plans cover both generic and brand-name prescription drugs. Like other insurance, people with Medicare will pay a monthly premium and a share of the cost of the prescription drugs. Costs will be different depending on the Medicare drug plan chosen.

What do people need to know about Medicare prescription drug coverage if they get food stamps?

- Enrollment in a Medicare drug plan is optional.
- Enrollment for Medicare drug plans is from November 15–December 31 each year for people who already have Medicare.
- There may be “extra help” paying Medicare prescription drug costs.
- Even if they don't qualify for extra help, they should consider joining a Medicare drug plan.



How does a person with Medicare get extra help paying for prescription drug costs?

A person may qualify for extra help paying for drugs if they have limited income and resources. If they have Medicaid, a Medicare Savings Program, or Supplemental Security Income (SSI), they will automatically get extra help and don't need to apply for it. Others will need to apply for extra help and can request an application from Social Security by calling 1-800-772-1213 or visiting www.socialsecurity.gov on the web to apply online. TTY users should call 1-800-325-0778, between 7:00 a.m. and 7:00 p.m. Monday through Friday. After they apply, they will get a notice in the mail that tells them if they qualify. Social Security's application process provides a person with the quickest aid decision. A person with Medicare can also apply at their local Medicaid office. Each state determines who qualifies for the extra help or other assistance their state provides.

Does a person who gets food stamps and claims a deduction for medical costs have to report a change in medical expenses if they get the extra help?

No. Changes in medical expenses don't have to be reported until the food stamp benefit is renewed. However, if medical expenses go up for any reason, the increased cost may be reported any time.

For more information about Medicare prescription drug coverage...

- Visit www.medicare.gov on the web. Under "Search Tools," select "Medicare Prescription Drug Plan Finder" to get personalized information about Medicare drug plans.
- Call the State Health Insurance Assistance Program (SHIP). (See a copy of the "Medicare & You" handbook for the telephone number.)
- Call 1-800-MEDICARE (1-800-633-4227). TTY users should call 1-877-486-2048.